

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ALFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Alford

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120440

Headteacher: Mr M H Duncalfe

Lead inspector: Mrs P A Simpson

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 October 2003

Inspection number: 260759

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 4 –11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 336

School address: Hanby Lane  
Alford  
Lincolnshire  
Postcode: LN13 9BJ

Telephone number: 01507 463414  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Spenceley

Date of previous inspection: 12 October 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school situated in the rural market town of Alford, Lincolnshire, that caters for pupils between the ages of four and 11. There are 336 pupils on the school roll: 174 boys and 162 girls. Children arrive at the school reflecting the full range of ability levels, but overall the attainment on entry is below average in basic literacy and numeracy skills. The 39 pupils in the Reception class have recently begun to attend full-time. Pupils are organised into 13 single age classes. Lincolnshire Policy Studies Research shows a high incidence of deprivation in the Alford area. It is also an area of significant pupil mobility; for example, 24 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission and ten left other than at the usual time of leaving in the academic year 2002/2003. The percentage of pupils (15.2 per cent) known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The majority of pupils are white, although a small number come from mixed backgrounds. Seventy-nine pupils (23.5 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs (SEN); this is broadly average. The majority have moderate learning difficulties. The number of pupils with statements of SEN (15) is well above average. In the last two years a number of teachers have changed. The school received the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 1999 and 2002, the Healthy Schools Award in 2002, and in 2003 it gained the Investor in People Award. The facilities are used regularly by the community and the school makes provision for Family Learning Programmes and other adult educational activities including computer training.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1515	Mrs P A Simpson	Lead inspector	Science, Information and communication technology, Art and design, Special educational needs
19419	Mrs S Boyle	Lay inspector	
30144	Mr E Hastings	Team inspector	Mathematics, Geography, History, Physical education, Foundation Stage
22990	Mr C B Furniss	Team inspector	English, Design and technology, Music, Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**This is an effective school** where the overall standard of work seen is average but pupils' achievement in relation to their prior attainment is good. The quality of teaching is good and a number of very good lessons were observed. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The outstanding leadership and very good management of the headteacher supported by a dynamic deputy headteacher.
- The vision and commitment of the governing body, senior management team and whole staff to school improvement.
- The very good breadth of opportunity in the curriculum which is enriched by the extra-curricular activities.
- The high quality of teaching that promotes very good relationships and attitudes and good learning.
- The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good and so is their attendance and punctuality.
- The provision for Reception children is of very high quality.
- The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, as is the support given by teaching assistants and other adults of whom many work in a voluntary capacity in supporting pupils at work.
- The links with parents and the community are a strength of the school.
- The inconsistencies in lesson planning in subjects other than English and mathematics mean that learning objectives and assessment opportunities are not always clear.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in 1998. All of the key issues have been addressed but there is still work to be done with regard to using assessment to respond to individual needs and developing pupils' understanding of how they can improve, mainly in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. It is planned for all subject co-ordinators to eventually monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subjects they lead. The school delivers the National Curriculum for information and communication technology as required. The less important key issues identified have all been actioned effectively.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	B	B
mathematics	D	C	B	B
science	D	C	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

For pupils in the 2003 classes, **achievement is good**. Children enter the school with standards in basic literacy and numeracy skills below those normally found. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in relation to all the Early Learning Goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception year. In the 2002 tests Year 2 standards were above average in reading, writing and well above average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in 2002 placed pupils as above average in science. The 2003 Year 2 school results show that more pupils exceeded the expected standard in their writing than in 2002, with a slight drop in the number of pupils attaining higher standards in reading, mathematics and science. When compared to attainment on entry to Reception, achievement by the end of Year 2 is good overall. In relation to similar schools the school was well

above average in 2002. By the end of Year 6 achievement continues to be good. Although the standards attained in the National Curriculum tests in 2003 by the Year 6 group were not as high as those attained in 2002, this represents good achievement given that a third of the group were on the special educational needs register. Inspectors found standards to be similar to those recorded in the most recent standard attainment tests in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, pupils are reaching standards expected for their ages including information and communication technology. Overall standards in writing, though improved, are still not as good as in speaking, listening and reading. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers due to the good quality of teaching and the focused, effective support given by teaching assistants and other adults. Trends over the last few years show that boys' results were not as high as girls' by the end of Year 6 in the core subjects but the gap is closing, in particular in science. In comparison with similar schools the science results were well above average. Slightly more boys than girls exceeded the expected standard in mathematics in 2003 tests.

The development of pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Teachers, teaching assistants and voluntary helpers promote very good relationships and attitudes. As a result most pupils enjoy coming to school, they behave very well and their attendance is higher than the national attendance rate.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. There is a very good breadth of opportunity in the curriculum, which is enriched by the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of teaching is **good overall** and as a result it makes a significant contribution to learning throughout the school. The provision for Reception children is of a very high quality. Teachers' assessments of children's achievements from the time they enter Reception are clearly linked to planning in the Foundation Stage of the curriculum with activities adapted to suit children who learn at different rates or have particular needs. There are inconsistencies in lesson planning in subjects other than English and mathematics which means that learning objectives and assessment opportunities are not always as clear as they should be. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, as is the support given by teaching assistants and the many other adults who work in a voluntary capacity.

The links with parents and the community are very good. The school has several established links with other schools. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are given very good attention. The school actively involves pupils by seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. All of the staff and the governing body are committed to the school's self-evaluation and to its use as a mechanism for school improvement. The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and plays a significant part in the strategic improvement of the school through action planning and the established performance management procedures.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school. They have very strong views on how approachable the school is, that the school is well led and managed, the teaching is good and there are good arrangements in place for settling their children into school life. Mostly pupils like school and they feel that they are fairly treated. A significant number are members of the extra-curricular clubs which are always oversubscribed. Pupils feel able to suggest improvements and this they do.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- The most important thing that the school should do to improve as it moves towards planning for the delivery of its 'enriched curriculum' is to address the inconsistencies in lesson planning, mainly in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, so that learning objectives and

assessment opportunities are clearly identified as a means of raising standards further in these subjects.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement overall is good. This judgement is based on the good achievement found in all of the work of Foundation Stage children. In Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 achievement is good. In some Year 5 lessons achievement is very good. The inspection took place in the first part of the autumn term, at the start of the academic year; at this time standards seen in Year 2 and Year 6 in English are average and in mathematics they are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Standards are above average in science. In the core subjects, Year 6 boys have generally attained lower standards than girls, but the gap is closing due to the strategies put into place to correct this alongside the good quality of the teaching and focused teaching support arrangements.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievements in relation to their prior attainment are good.
- Children get a very good start in the Reception classes and they make very good progress in their learning.
- Standards in science are consistently above average.
- Improvement in mathematics standards since the last inspection (1998).
- Standards in writing, though improved, are still not as high as in reading and speaking and listening.
- Standards in information and communication technology are now in line with the national expectations as a result of improved teaching and learning resources.
- Good attention has been given to improving the achievements of boys; they are now attaining similar standards to the girls.

#### **Commentary**

1. When children enter the Reception classes their attainment varies with different groups of children. More recently assessments made show that attainment in basic literacy and numeracy skills development is below average when compared with that of children of a similar age. Although the children have only been in school a few weeks they are achieving well due to the regular assessments made of all children as a means of determining the next steps of learning. They are making rapid progress in all areas of learning \*. Children are well prepared for the transition from the Foundation Stage curriculum to the National Curriculum.
2. The results of the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 2 show similar standards to those reported in the last inspection based on the 1997 tests. In 2002 standards were above the national average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared with those schools with pupils from similar backgrounds they were well above average in 2002 in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments placed pupils above average in science for this same year. The 2003, school national test results show that not as many Year 2 pupils gained the expected level for their age as in 2002; the size of the group, however, was nearly twice as large as that in 2002 and comprised a greater number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Standards have fluctuated from year to year but, based on the prior attainment of the different groups, the rising numbers of pupils with special educational needs and pupil mobility factors, most pupils achieve as well as they can. The Year 2 average points scores for the school in 2002 show a rising trend as the summary details. \*\*



- \* Early Learning Goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of the Reception year in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative; physical and personal, social and emotional development.
- \*\* All levels of the National Curriculum assessments are awarded a points score. The expected average points scores are given for Years 2 and 6.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.4 (14.6)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	17.9 (16.3)	16.5 (16.2)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6, results were above average in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement in English where standards in the last inspection were reported as average. When the school's results are compared to those in similar schools they are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The trend over the period 1998 - 2002 in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. Standards of attainment in the Year 6 national tests have fluctuated from year to year. The upward improvement in the average points scores is particularly significant in all three core subjects in 2002 when compared with the national average. This Year 6 group made above average progress in all three core subjects when compared to their Year 2 average points scores recorded in 1998. Results of the most recent standard attainment test indicate average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (26.7)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.0 (27.0)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	29.8 (28.7)	28.3 (28.3)

*There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Pupils' literacy skills are developing well because of the good links between English and the other subjects of the curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been carefully implemented, monitored and evaluated. Writing for different purposes was seen in several subjects including science. There was some evidence of the use of numeracy skills in other subjects, in particular in science in Years 1, 3 and 4. Good use is made of the new computer suite to develop pupils' skills in word processing, uses of text, artwork and presenting data in a variety of forms including graphs. There was little computer work seen in classrooms during the inspection days. A significant fact about attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is that Years 1 and 2 pupils are now gaining a very secure foundation in their early learning of ICT skills due to the improved resources and teaching of this subject.

## Attainment: Year 2

Subjects	Inspection findings in 1998	Current judgements Based on inspection evidence 2003 (October)	Pupils' achievements in relation to prior attainment	Comments
English: reading	In line with the national average	Above average	Pupils read well and they are developing good reading skills	The reading enhancement programme is effective in raising standards
English: writing	In line with the national average	Average	Some improvement but achievements are not as good as in reading	Writing is an area identified for ongoing improvement
Mathematics	In line with the national average	Above average	All pupils achieve well	Regular use of assessments enables pupil progress to be tracked well
Science	In line with the national average	Above average	Progress is good, including for those with SEN, in all aspects of science	Teachers are very secure in their command of this area of learning
Information and communication technology	Unsatisfactory, below the national expectation	In line with the national expectations	Progress is particularly good in Years 1 and 2	Good attention is given now to the acquisition of basic skills development
Religious Education	In line with the expectation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus	Reaching standards expected for their age	Progress is good; pupils achieve well	Good links with other subjects help to strengthen pupils' understanding

## Attainment: Year 6

Subjects	Inspection findings in 1998	Current judgements based on inspection evidence 2003 (October)	Pupils' achievements in relation to prior attainment	Comments
English	In line with the national average	Average	Pupils achieve well given the lower than expected attainment on entry	Very effective match of staff to the needs of pupils
Mathematics	In line with the national average	Average	Good progress is made and pupils achieve well, including those with SEN.	Good attention has been given to the achievements of boys
Science	For most pupils in line with expected levels	Above average	Boys and girls are now achieving well and to their full potential	Improved opportunities in place for problem solving and investigative work
Information and communication technology	Unsatisfactory, below the national expectation	In line with national expectation	Standards have improved given the lower than expected starting points and capabilities of some	Improvements are due to improved resources, staff capability and clear plans
Religious education	In line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus	Reaching standards expected for their age	Progress is good; pupils achieve well	Pupils' personal development is well supported

5. In the other subjects where a secure judgement is possible pupils' knowledge and understanding is in line with the national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Judgements in art and design, history, design and technology and music are made on the observation of a limited number of lessons and samples of work. Year 6 pupils are attaining above the expected level for their age in music. The quality of singing in assemblies was good throughout the school.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers in relation to their prior attainment. This is because of the very good provision and support given by teachers, teaching assistants and other adults who work in the school. Class teachers thoroughly assess individual needs and progress from the Reception year in liaison with the SEN co-ordinator and Individual Learning Programmes are put into place where necessary. This close co-operation and regular reviews of pupils' targets contribute significantly to the good rate of progress made by these pupils. Higher attainers achieve as well as they should in the core subjects of the curriculum. In the other subjects inconsistencies in lesson planning mean that clear learning objectives were not always evident to meet the needs of the different groups of pupils. Where clear learning objectives were documented and shared with pupils both teacher and pupil assessed the learning outcomes. They used the information well as a means of planning for further improvement.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attendance, their attitudes to work and their behaviour have improved since the previous inspection and are now very good. Pupils' personal development has improved significantly and is also very good.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance rates and punctuality have been steadily improving.
- Pupils like school and enjoy their work.
- Learning targets are not always shared with pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good.
- Some pupils feel that some aspects of playtimes could be better.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.

### **Commentary**

7. Attendance rates have been rising steadily and pupils arrive at school on time. The school keeps a very close watch on individual, class and whole-school attendance and punctuality. This vigilance, combined with prompt and appropriate action, has led to the year on year rise in attendance and the improvements since the previous inspection.
8. Pupils come to school cheerfully in the morning. They like school and are prepared to work hard. Pupils' very positive attitudes come partly from their parents who are very satisfied with the school, partly because pupils like their teachers and find the lessons interesting, and partly because pupils enjoy the very many opportunities for extra-curricular activities. All these things combine to make school a very positive experience for pupils of all ages.
9. Many teachers share the learning objectives for the lesson with pupils, but this is not always the case. Pupils would have greater ownership of their learning if the learning objectives rather than just the activities were always shared with them. Similarly, it is mostly teachers who set the learning targets, rather than teachers and pupils writing them together.
10. Pupils behave well and do as they are told. Staff have high expectations for how pupils should behave. They have established very effective relationships with pupils through a very positive and valuing approach, and it is this that is having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and

providing the model for the way pupils relate to others. Pupils get on well with each other and disagreements are usually of a very minor nature. In the playground, there has been a marked improvement in behaviour with the introduction of staggered lunchtimes and playground games. There has also been an increase in the numbers of mid-day supervisory staff so that staffing levels are good and supervisory staff are freed up to play with pupils. The playground games have also helped to improve relationships between pupils and mid-day supervisory staff. They have had appropriate training for dealing with behavioural incidents, and in the best examples the mid-day supervisory staff listen to pupils and are positive in their approach.

11. Pupils know very well the difference between right and wrong. Teachers are very good about tackling playground issues in personal and social education lessons, where pupils are able to discuss their behaviour towards others, the feelings associated with not being kind to others, and to reflect on how they might behave differently. However, a few pupils do not always feel that other children play with them as well as they might.
12. The number of extra-curricular opportunities and the school's very good emphasis on cultural development gives pupils enhanced opportunities to experience a wider range of art, music and drama. The multicultural dimension is better than it was at the previous inspection, but the school does recognise that there is scope to develop this still further and plans are under way. Pupils have a very good understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community and the need to work together. The School Council has been instrumental in giving all pupils the chance to suggest what they would like for their school. It is well organised with time to allow everyone to have the opportunity to put forward their ideas, and even the youngest children know that if they want to change things in school then they can do it through the School Council. A good example of the impact of the council is the refurbishment of the girls' toilets. At the previous inspection greater ownership for pupils of the school's vision for the future was a key issue. The School Council has given pupils that sense of ownership and made them feel that they can influence what happens in school.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence	
School data	4.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.5

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – any other mixed background

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
286	0	0
2	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

Overall the school provides a good quality of education. There is a very good breadth of opportunity in the curriculum which is enriched by the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Strengths include the care shown to pupils and the good quality of teaching. A further strength is the links that the school has established with its parents and community. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There are some inconsistencies in lesson planning in subjects other than English and mathematics and, as a result, learning objectives and assessment opportunities are not always clear to pupils.

### **Teaching and learning**

Throughout the school teaching is good. As a result of this good teaching the pupils learn well. The quality of assessment of pupils is very good in Reception and good in English and mathematics but is only satisfactory overall because of inconsistencies in how it is used in other subjects.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and the needs of young learners.
- Teachers relate to pupils very well and involve and encourage them very effectively through challenging questioning linked to each pupil's capability.
- Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond to this and work hard and productively.
- Teaching assistants and all of the other adults who provide help work closely with teachers to provide very good support to all pupils.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Inconsistencies in lesson planning in subjects other than English and mathematics mean that there is sometimes a lack of clarity of just what teachers expect pupils to learn and how they will assess how well they have learned.

### **Commentary**

13. Pupils achieve well in the school because of good teaching that takes account of their individual needs and because very positive relationships promote an atmosphere of trust and a desire to please and do well.
14. Good teaching is consistent throughout the school and across all subjects. Teachers know their subjects well and lessons are generally brisk and keep pupils well motivated, with well-targeted questions that focus on individual pupils and challenge and extend them. A good example was a Year 6 ICT lesson, where the very good, motivating teaching led to successful learning and consolidation of ICT skills. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage pupils well. Teaching assistants are very closely involved at all stages and work very well with teachers to ensure that all pupils make gains in their learning. The commitment and involvement of all staff and of the many volunteers who support a range of activities, such as the reading enhancement programme, is a strength of the school. The very positive relationships and attitudes to learning in the school are largely a result of this commitment. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs, or as they work individually. As a result, pupils work very hard and complete plenty of work, often working together and co-operating with each other.
15. Planning in mathematics and English is good. In these subjects pupils are set targets for improvement and they know what these are, which gives a clear focus to learning. In other subjects lesson planning lacks consistency and where learning objectives are set they are sometimes too vague. The learning objectives are often not shared with the pupils. Consequently, although the teachers have good and often very good skills of communication, teaching and management, the lessons sometimes lack focus. It also makes it hard to build in

clear assessment opportunities and to know just how to assess how well the pupils are understanding and performing. The very best lessons were seen when there were clear objectives, which the teachers shared with the pupils so that everyone knew where they were going. Both teacher and pupils were then able to assess how well they had learned and teachers could use this information to help plan the next lesson so that work set could be targeted even better to the needs of individual pupils.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13 (27%)	26 (54%)	9 (19%)	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

**The curriculum**

A very good range and quality of experiences are provided for all pupils to ensure that they all have the opportunity to learn and make progress. The curriculum is enriched by the wide variety of extra-curricular activities and experiences, including visits and visitors.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The breadth of the curriculum provides very well for all pupils in all stages throughout the school.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and the good progress they make is in part due to the effective support they receive from the teaching assistants.
- Pupils’ personal, social and health education is very well provided for.
- The school has good links with other schools.
- There is improved access to information and communication technology, but the development of control technology is not yet complete.
- It has not been possible to install disabled access to the first floor.

**Commentary**

16. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. The national guidelines have been adapted to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils in the foundation subjects. They are organised into a two year programme of topic areas which take account of the two age groups who study the topic at the same time so as to ensure that all pupils receive an equal entitlement. The National Strategies for teaching Numeracy and Literacy are firmly in place and have been successful in improving the standards of pupils’ work. Religious education is taught in accordance with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. There is equality of access to the curriculum for all groups of pupils. The adoption of the additional strategies supports the learning of the lower-attaining pupils well. The curriculum for Reception children is very well planned to provide them with a good range of exciting and stimulating activities and ensures that they make very good progress. The extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum with opportunities to enhance pupils’ experiences and skills development very well in music, the arts, sport and ICT. The pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for through early identification, and through the provision of well-trained and high-quality support staff.
17. Pupils’ personal, social and health education (PHSE) is very well provided for through an appropriate programme and is linked to the Healthy Schools Initiative. The school nurse supports the school in the delivery of sex education as well as giving attention to the use and

misuse of drugs and alcohol. The school has well-established links with its neighbouring secondary school, and shares their facilities for sport and swimming. Senior school pupils become reading partners with their younger counterparts, and this raises the value of reading, and offers encouragement to younger readers. Staff interchange their expertise in mathematics and science, and higher-attaining pupils attend masterclasses as well as summer schools for the gifted. Joint school projects including music and dance and drama festivals enhance experiences in the arts.

18. The provision for ICT has improved and now meets statutory requirements. The school is able to access ICT resources at the adjacent secondary school, with whom it has worked collaboratively to develop a scheme of work. However, there are currently few opportunities to develop control technology, as resources are limited. The school is aware of this and is planning to develop this area further.
19. The school has a Race Equality Policy in place, but at present is considering how best it can be monitored. Disabled access to the first floor is also an issue that the school is aware of and is making plans to address the matter as a part of the school's access plan. The school generally has a good supply of resources to support the curriculum, and the indoor and outdoor accommodation is good, apart from the lack of a designated outdoor play area for the Reception children. This is likely to be addressed in the near future when a Parent and Family room is constructed. A key strategic priority for 2004/05 is to enrich the curriculum by reviewing and refining the curriculum design and assessment and to achieve the 'Artsmark Award'.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school is very caring and supportive. It listens to pupils, values what they say and takes appropriate action. In this it is very good. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. There is good support, advice and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very good emphasis on pupils' health and safety.
- There is a very effective induction for pupils starting in the Reception class.
- Pupils are listened to and their views are acted upon.
- Pupils could be involved more in the setting of their learning targets.

### **Commentary**

20. The school makes good use of the expertise on the governing body to monitor and take appropriate action for health and safety. In lessons, teachers are very clear about health and safety issues and ensure that pupils work within a safe environment. Pupils are taught how to use equipment independently and safely. For example, children in the Foundation Stage are shown the safe use of equipment such as staplers and scissors, and are given time to practise before being allowed to use them in unsupervised situations. Very nearly all staff have first aid qualifications, and staff are clear about child protection procedures. The school makes very good use of the school nurse who runs a 'drop-in session' for parents, assists with sex and drug education lessons and is available for advice and support.
21. The induction programme for children starting in the Reception class works well. The good links with the local playgroup and a series of visits to school mean that children quickly become familiar with adults working in the school, and with class routines. Staff are very welcoming and very reassuring and this helps children to feel settled and happy and confident to learn. An illustration of how well children have settled was the assembly that the Reception children performed for the rest of the school. Children had only been in school for a very few weeks but they were confident to stand up in front of staff and pupils, to sing and do the actions



for the repertoire of songs that they had learnt since they had started school. They showed amazing poise in this, but most of all they enjoyed themselves.

22. The school listens well to pupils. The School Council is a very good example of this. What is particularly good is the way that the school councillors have access to every class on a regular, planned basis. Pupils themselves are confident that they have the opportunity to put forward their views and that they will be listened to. Pupils write their own 'annual school report' alongside that of their teachers. This involves them well with their learning, but there is scope to extend this to give pupils more opportunities to be more involved in setting targets for their own learning.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a very good relationship with parents. It is justifiably proud of its very good links with the local and wider community. The Family Learning Programmes are well established, and links with other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- The school is open, friendly and genuinely welcomes parents.
- The school is very much a part of the local community.
- Provision through Family Learning Programmes is good.
- The school's links with the wider community greatly enhance educational provision.
- The school has good links with other schools.

### **Commentary**

23. Parents are very supportive of the school and are very satisfied with all that it is doing. Parents help their children with homework, and many make good use of the opportunities for contact through the reading record cards. The school regularly sends out questionnaires to parents, and is genuinely interested in their views, but it does not routinely consult all the parents about proposed changes in policy or new policies.
24. Teachers are always available to talk to parents, and morning routines mean that they see parents and have time to talk with them. The school's open and friendly approach means that parents feel that they can go with concerns or suggestions and they will be listened to, and that any problems will be sorted out.
25. The school is very much a part of the rural community which it serves. Very many local people, including parents and grandparents, help in classrooms and support the intensive reading programme. The volunteers' commitment is very great and very valuable to the school. The school, for its part, invites the community to exhibitions, events and when launching new initiatives such as the Healthy Schools Award. In this example, local businesses whose work involved an aspect of healthy living were invited to display their products. The businesses ranged from local shops to the local dentist.
26. The Family Learning Programmes for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology had not yet started for the autumn term 2003 so it was not possible to see them during the inspection. However, they are well established and very popular. Photographic evidence shows a good range of activities that are enjoyed greatly by parents and children.
27. The school has a number of very good links with the wider community that have greatly enhanced learning opportunities, and children's enjoyment of school. The school's bid for the national 'Healthy Schools Award' mentioned earlier has led to some exciting developments, such as the School Council, and it has increased extra-curricular and sporting opportunities. Through the award, pupils were encouraged to think about how they could lead a healthier

lifestyle. The school has worked hard to promote itself as a healthy place to be, and the work continues with plans to improve the outside environment. As part of the Healthy Schools Award and through links with the Children's Fund, the provision for play at lunchtimes has been greatly improved. There is a very good range of games and equipment for pupils to use which they very much enjoy. The mid-day supervisory staff have been at the forefront of this and have worked very hard to make it a success. Where it is working particularly well, they are helping the children with the games and at times joining in rather than just acting in a supervisory role.

28. The school is now working towards the Artsmark Award. As has already been mentioned, pupils do have a good range, particularly, of music, drama and dance experiences. As part of the school's bid for the Artsmark, pupils' experiences of the arts are being extended, and the school is supported well in this through its funding from the New Opportunities Fund. Pupils are taught by a specialist in an extra-curricular setting, and have experience of a very good range of arts design and craft-type activities. It is likely that this will be available to all Year 6 pupils, and will give them the chance to work with specialists and with pupils from other schools. This will provide an additional experience of learning to work with new people, and help to prepare pupils for transition to secondary school.
29. Links with a number of other schools are used well. They enable the school to draw on specialist expertise and resources and provide valuable support for staff and pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are very good, with the headteacher giving excellent personal leadership with complete support from a committed and dynamic deputy head. This commitment is shared by the senior management team, who give very good support. Other key staff support the headteacher effectively, and their leadership is good overall. The governing body is effective in its role.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, which has helped to create a very positive atmosphere and a desire in all staff to continue improving.
- The very good quality of leadership of the deputy headteacher and the senior management team that works with the headteacher to move the school on.
- The governing body understands the school's strengths and weaknesses well, and this allows it to challenge and support school management effectively.
- There is a very impressive commitment, dedication and team spirit among all staff and this makes for a very positive atmosphere and relationships in the school.
- There are very good procedures for inducting new staff and for continuing to develop staff professionally, which helps to motivate and improve staff expertise.
- The very high-quality financial procedures and day-to-day management of finances helps the school to achieve educational priorities.
- Monitoring of teachers' lesson planning is not rigorous enough (with the exception of English and mathematics) in ensuring that there is consistency and that learning objectives and assessment opportunities are being effectively planned and built upon.

### **Commentary**

30. There is a very strong feeling of commitment to the school and to improving the school among all the staff and this is largely due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher. He has a clear vision of excellence for the school, which is shared by all staff. The headteacher is very well supported by a dynamic deputy and senior management team, all of whom work very closely together. The governors understand their role well, have a good understanding of the strengths and needs of the school and support well, whilst keeping an effective overview.

31. The very effective school management is reflected in a very clear school improvement plan in which all staff and governors were involved and which has set clear priorities, based on a very good awareness of strengths and weaknesses of the school. For example, the school recognised the need to improve writing and introduced a range of measures to meet this need. The comparatively poor performance of boys was similarly addressed. As a result of these plans, the measures introduced and the monitoring and evaluation that has continued, there has been a significant improvement in both of these areas. The situation continues to be monitored. Each subject co-ordinator has his/her own action plan and they are expected to have an overview of and monitor the subject. Except in the core subjects of English and mathematics there has been little monitoring of lessons but this is an area where the school is keen to continue to develop the subject co-ordinator's role.
32. The school is highly committed to inclusion. The very good provision for special educational needs is one aspect of this.
33. The very good procedures for performance management and the system for inducting new staff into the school also help to bring about school improvement. The way in which new staff have settled so well into the school and the quality of staff relationships shows the strength of the support system to be very good. Everyone spoken to was full of praise for the school and the support they receive.
34. Leadership and management of English and ICT are very good and they are good in mathematics, music, physical education and the Foundation Stage of the curriculum. Several other subject co-ordinators are new in their posts and are still settling in but they have a good overview of the needs of their subjects and are keen to develop them. Co-ordinators monitor their subjects through checking the planning, formal and informal discussions with colleagues and by sampling pupils' work. Although the long- and medium-term planning is monitored effectively, there is insufficient checking of teachers' actual lesson plans and there are inconsistencies in subjects other than English and mathematics. Different teachers plan in different ways and sometimes the actual objectives of the lesson, what the teachers are expecting the pupils to have learned, are unclear or vague. This makes it difficult to build in effective ways of assessing how well the pupils have learned during the lesson. It is then much harder to plan to meet the needs of individual pupils in the next lesson.
35. The school finances are managed very well and this helps the school to achieve its educational priorities. The day-to-day financial running of the school is also very effective and the governors, headteacher and administrative assistant work very well together to make sure that principles of best value are applied.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	824,135
Total expenditure	757,380
Expenditure per pupil	2,260. 84

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	64,100
Balance carried forward to the next	58,590

# **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

## **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The provision for children in Reception is of high quality and is a strength of the school. A very well-planned curriculum ensures that children learn quickly through the good range of activities and experiences provided for them in a stimulating and lively learning environment. Many children enter school with below average levels of attainment and make rapid progress in all areas of learning because of the good quality of the teaching. After being at school for only six weeks, and four of those on a part-time basis, children are achieving very well. Their development is regularly assessed and is fundamental in determining their next steps in learning, and underpins the speed of their progress. The provision is led and managed well. There is a good ratio of adults to children to ensure that their needs are met. Very good procedures are in place to ensure that children are well prepared for starting school and settle in quickly. Children who have SEN are well catered for, with their particular difficulties being addressed early.

Due to the timing of the inspection, and the organisation of the timetable, it has not been possible to gather detailed evidence in all areas of learning.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because of the good quality of teaching they receive.
- Very good assessment procedures assist their development.
- Children's independence is encouraged through the daily routines.

### **Commentary**

36. The daily routines in Reception ensure that children receive a wide range of experiences, and learn to work independently and to concentrate for good periods of time. During the inspection, children were seen working together in a group and taking turns to speak or handle equipment. Sometimes they shared the activity with a partner, in, for example, the role-play area, or in a wheeled toy in the outdoor play area. The school managers recognise the importance of Reception children being full members of the school. The positive effect of this upon children's personal development was very evident when they performed number songs to the school in assembly with great confidence.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching of pre-reading letter sounds and related basic skills.
- There is wide variation in children's speaking skills.

### **Commentary**

37. Teachers use imaginative ways of introducing letter sounds, like the cracking of an egg to emphasise the letter 'e'. Children practise drawing and writing the letter with their fingers in the air, on the carpet or the palms of their hands. They learn to write their names and to recognise their initial sounds. Letters of the alphabet are practised, and some words are written to

support other areas of learning. Children share books together in groups, and show a good understanding of them. They know about the cover, the author, and the illustrator. They are able to use the front cover to make predictions about the story. Their progress is good as a result of the effective teaching, and it is likely that most of them will achieve, and many will exceed, the Early Learning Goals before they leave Reception.

38. On entry to school, a number of children have below average speaking and listening skills. The teachers make good provision for the development of these, through creating frequent opportunities for engaging children in conversation and discussion. Role-play areas provide situations where children are encouraged to use their imagination and language at the same time, and this helps them to develop confidence in speaking. Children listen carefully to stories with interest and enjoyment, and show high levels of concentration.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good development of numeracy skills through a very good range of activities, experiences and opportunities.
- Good teaching of mathematical development.

### **Commentary**

39. Children's mathematical abilities are developing well due to the good level of teaching. Many are making good progress and are already counting to 20 and above. This is because of the stimulating learning environment that is created for them, in which they are eager to learn and to do well. They are being introduced to the names of solid shapes, and are already familiar with two-dimensional shapes of circle, triangle, square and rectangle. Children have been practising writing numerals correctly. They learn how to use money through role-play in the fruit and vegetable shop. At every opportunity children use counting, for example counting the number of children when lining up for dinner, and during registration. They have learnt many number songs. The majority will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in these three areas is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision of a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities ensures that pupils achieve well in these areas of learning.
- The outside area is currently shared with the school and provision of designated play areas is limited.

### **Commentary**

40. Due to the timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see these areas taught, but evidence from the sample of children's work indicates the high quality of the provision. Children keep a diary of observations of the period of growth of a bean and use the computer to create a picture to illustrate it. They are able to identify accurately which items of everyday equipment use electricity, and which do not. Children cut out pictures and sort them into sets. Work with magnets shows that they are aware of those objects that do or do not attract. Most children are

likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year in knowledge and understanding of the world.

41. The children use the school playground for their wheeled toys and show good levels of co-ordination when pedalling tricycles and other pedalled toys. They play together well, using their imagination, and take turns willingly. They are taught to use scissors, sticky tape, glue and a stapler so that they can use them independently and safely. When using the computer they have good mouse control, and are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals before joining Year 1.
42. Time limitations meant there was little opportunity to make a judgement on children's creative development, but they enjoy using a range of media to create pictures, portraits and designs. The puppet theatre offers opportunities to create imaginary stories to entertain one another. The sample of work indicates that the children are achieving well and will reach the expected level by the end of the Reception year.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English across the school is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Leadership and management are very good and this helps to move the subject on.
- Very effective match of staff to the needs of pupils and their total commitment to raising standards.
- Good quality teaching ensures good learning and progress.
- Very good encouragement and engagement of all pupils provides motivation and results in very good attitudes and behaviour.
- Good use of literacy in all subjects helps to secure standards.
- Standards in writing, though improved, are still not as good as in speaking and listening and in reading.
- There is some inconsistency in sharing clear learning objectives with pupils so that all lessons have a really clear focus.

#### **Commentary**

43. Results of the most recent standard attainment tests indicate that pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 achieve above the national average for reading but that writing is not as good and standards in English overall are about average. Levels of attainment on entry fluctuate but overall are below the expected level and progress is good, with an upward trend in results.
44. This inspection took place quite early in the school year and results during the inspection show that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are at about the level expected of their age. Given the quality of teaching there may be considerable improvement by the end of the year. Levels in speaking and listening and in reading are above average in Years 2 and 6. Given the below average levels of attainment when children enter the school, progress is good and pupils achieve well. Boys have generally achieved less well than girls but the school has effectively implemented strategies to correct this and these seem to be working well.
45. Pupils develop good listening and speaking skills. This was observed in a Year 1 lesson where the teacher spoke very quietly but effectively so that pupils had to listen carefully. They were encouraged to share their ideas about having lost something special to them, which they did happily. By Year 6 pupils are having serious discussions about text and constructing and developing arguments for and against a range of topics, such as school uniform and the use of

homework. They speak confidently and express themselves clearly and well and know the difference between formal and informal speaking.

46. Pupils read well. Attention is paid to developing good reading skills all the way through the school and even at this stage in Year 2 most pupils are able to join in and read the big book, 'Peace at Last', with obvious understanding and enjoyment. They join in with enthusiasm and expression. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of books and how to use them for pleasure and for learning. They can explain how the school library works, quickly find a book on a given topic and show how to use it to research information. They have positive attitudes to reading and regularly read both at home and at school. The reading enhancement programme has been effective in raising standards of reading in the school and parents confirm that it boosts confidence in other subjects too.
47. Writing has been identified as an area needing improvement and effective methods of raising standards have been put in place. These appear to be working well, but standards in writing are still not as good as they are in reading. Regular attention is paid to handwriting. Several Year 2 pupils are writing independently and one girl uses paragraphs. Year 6 pupils are drafting, editing and rewriting their own work and produce a range of writing in a variety of genres, including narrative, stories, reporting, discussions and poetry.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

48. There are good links between English and other subjects and the National Literacy Strategy has been developed well in the school. Examples were seen of sustained and extended writing being developed and supported in a range of subjects. Good use of the computer suite is made to develop pupils' ability to use word processing, text and artwork to produce work.
49. Teaching is good throughout the school, with examples of very good teaching seen. Teachers work very well with the teaching assistants to make sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Teachers have a wide range of teaching and behaviour management skills that motivate pupils and encourage very good attitudes and behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. In the best teaching there are very clear lesson objectives which are shared with the pupils and which give a focus for the lesson and give the pupils a better knowledge of what they are learning and why. However, not all teachers share the learning goals, which leads to some loss of focus in some lessons.
50. The subject is very well led and managed, with a clear action plan and a strategic vision of how the subject needs to be developed. There is very good monitoring of how well the pupils are doing so that extra support can be targeted where needed. English supports pupils' spiritual and personal development well and pupils use a range of texts to help cultural and multicultural development. Pupils in Year 6, for example, talked with enthusiasm and understanding about the work they did on Macbeth and those in Year 5 used story openings that included a Jamaican setting.
51. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement in standards and teaching since the last inspection.
- The rigorous use of assessment to ensure that planning meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Use of self-evaluation ensures that the weaker areas of the subject have been identified as investigations and problem solving, and these are now being addressed.
- The leadership and management of mathematics are good.

### Commentary

52. There has been steady improvement in the results of the national tests over the last few years, although they did not meet their target for last year. There were several reasons for this, but predominantly because about one third of those pupils had special educational needs. However, an above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels by Year 6, an indication of the effort that has been invested in the achievement of all pupils and including the higher-attaining ones. Good attention has been paid to the achievement of boys, and the effective teaching has ensured that they are now achieving similar standards to the girls in Year 6. The lower-attaining pupils are well provided for through support from the teaching of the additional strategies throughout Years 3, 4 and 5, with booster lessons for Year 6. Regular assessments, as well as end of year assessments, enable progress to be tracked, and the targeting of those pupils who are making little progress. Pupils have individual targets and this keeps them informed of what they need to do to achieve the next level. Consequently, all pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their attainment levels on entry to the school. Pupils are on course to achieve average standards by the end of Year 6, and above average standards by the end of Year 2.
53. The quality of teaching has improved since 1998 and it is now good across the school, with some examples of very good teaching seen during the inspection. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of the teaching of the National Strategy that is now firmly embedded in daily practice throughout the school. All lessons begin with activities to encourage mental agility, and this contributes effectively to pupils' mathematical development, such as basic number facts and multiplication tables. Lessons are well planned and delivered providing an appropriate balance of time for the taught element and the main activity for pupils. All groups are well supported with the level of challenge well matched to ability. The ends of lessons are used well to assess pupils' achievements and learning. The careful organisation of Years 5 and 6 classes ensures that teachers are more able to focus their lessons more precisely on the different ability groups, and this has a beneficial effect upon pupils' progress. Teaching assistants play an important role in lessons, ensuring that pupils receive appropriate support according to their individual needs. This includes pupils with special educational needs who are very well supported and make good progress as a result. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is very high, and this has a very positive effect upon pupils' ability and desire to learn.
54. The increased emphasis on investigations and problem solving enables pupils to begin to use their number knowledge and skills on a regular basis. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson when pupils of all abilities showed growing confidence in their ability to calculate the length of the sides of rectangles knowing only the perimeter, and using their measuring skills very accurately.
55. The co-ordinator knows this subject area well, and has a clear picture based on the analysis of test results where the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics are. Formal monitoring of teaching and learning ensures that support can be provided where it is needed to ensure that



pupils are achieving as well as they are able. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. There was evidence of a limited amount of the use of numeracy skills across other subjects. It was used in a Year 4 science lesson to support their work on human movement and growth. Pupils carried out a survey of hand span lengths, and used a bar chart to illustrate their findings. Year 3 made correct predictions and worked at problem solving activities, and Year 1 used charts to support their work in science. There were occasions when pupils used graphs in ICT to represent data.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards achieved at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average.
- Pupils make at least good progress against their earlier attainment and some make very good progress.
- Good attention is given to providing opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out investigations.
- Day-to-day planning is inconsistent and assessment opportunities are not always identified.

#### **Commentary**

57. Over half of the pupils are working above the expected minimum level for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Boys and girls now attain equally well. This is due to the priority given to improving the work of boys and the good attention given to challenging higher-attaining pupils. Opportunities for problem solving and investigative work have improved since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in all aspects of science. They communicate their findings using ICT, in writing, drawings and charts.
58. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are very secure in their command of this area of learning and, as a result, pupils have a good command of scientific vocabulary and they readily make suggestions and predictions when appropriate. Good attention is given to developing scientific enquiry and this has significantly contributed to the improved standards. Very good attention is given to promoting high standards of behaviour. In a Year 5 lesson on key facts about the earth, sun and moon pupils presented their ideas and explanations imaginatively, with many incorporating drama activities. The earth was described in one group as '...like a jigsaw puzzle'. Daily lesson planning was presented in a variety of ways and assessment opportunities did not feature very often. It is recognised that assessment across the age groups is an area for future development in this subject as documented in the school's assessment policy; however, thorough teacher assessments are conducted in Years 2 and 6 as is required.
59. The subject is being led and managed by a temporary co-ordinator and it is satisfactory in this holding situation. Systems were put into place to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning following the 1998 inspection. These have lapsed but it is acknowledged that formal monitoring will recommence when a permanent co-ordinator is assigned to the subject. Overall improvement has been good since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The recent improved provision of computers in the information and communication technology suite.
- Improved staff capability and confidence in using information and communication technology as a teaching and learning resource.
- Leadership is very good.
- Staff are very well supported by the part-time technician and teaching assistants.
- To provide a better range of resources for control technology.
- To improve day-to-day lesson planning and build in straightforward, manageable assessment routinely so as to help pupils overcome any difficulties.

### **Commentary**

60. At the time of the last inspection standards were reported as unsatisfactory and the time given to teaching and learning was reported as insufficient. Standards observed during the inspection show that the majority of pupils are working at the expected level for their age and some higher attainers are achieving beyond this. All classes in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 have lessons in the ICT suite. As a result, standards have improved and most pupils are achieving better than that reported in 1998, given their particular starting points and capabilities. Progress has been particularly good in Years 1 and 2 because of the acquisition of skills on a regular basis from this early age due to the recently improved number of computers in the specialist teaching area. Not all pupils have experienced the opportunity to discuss and describe their experiences of ICT and its uses in society. The co-ordinator is aware that there is a need to provide further resources so that older pupils can have a broader experience of control technology. This is being addressed with consultations taking place with the adjacent technology secondary school ICT department. Teaching assistants and the ICT technician give very good support to staff and pupils. The teaching and learning is good overall because of the improved resources and staff capability to use ICT. The leadership of ICT is a strength. The subject co-ordinator is ably supported by a Year 5 teacher. Together they have a sense of purpose and high aspirations to improve the provision. An ICT record sheet is being piloted in Years 1 and 2 but as yet there is no whole-school assessment system in place as a means of promoting better learning and higher achievement. The extra-curricular ICT club is very popular with pupils, with high attendance rates. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

61. This is a developing area. Classroom computers are shortly to be linked to the network. In some of the English, history and science lessons observed the use of computers extended pupils' learning well. Displays and discussions with pupils indicate that ICT skills are used to support and consolidate learning in other subjects including art and design. However, although there is a computer in each class, they were not all seen in use during the inspection. An audit of planned links to other subjects and an evaluation of the contribution ICT makes to them, including the ICT skills used, would enable the school to identify where improvements are needed and any software or other resourcing needs.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography

No geography teaching was seen during the inspection, but an examination of a sample of a small amount of pupils' work and the curriculum plans indicates that provision for the subject is **satisfactory**.

### Commentary

62. From the limited amount of evidence available it is likely that standards by the end of Year 6 will be in line with those expected for pupils of this age. The curriculum has been carefully planned around the national guidelines. This includes opportunities for pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding through practical activities involving visits to places further afield in addition to their local environment.

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Linking history with other areas of the curriculum gives pupils a broader and more rounded view of the subject.
- Pupils' use of research encourages the good development of their literacy skills.

### Commentary

63. A feature of the teaching of history was the use made of the links with art and design, and dance, so that pupils got a broader and more rounded view of the subject through their participation in other aspects. For example, Years 3 and 4 in their study of Henry VIII were able to participate in traditional Tudor dancing with appropriate music of the period. This enhances pupils' understanding of customs and traditions, and of how the Tudor people used their leisure time for entertainment. In art and design lessons pupils use their skills to produce Tudor portraits. Visits to Gainsborough Old Hall provide further opportunities to extend their learning through dressing in costumes of the period for role-play activities, and learning about the preparation of food and drink, and celebrations. By Year 6 pupils are likely to be achieving levels in line with national expectations.

64. In the two lessons that it was possible to observe pupils are undertaking research activities that involved them in reading for information. Year 3 pupils found the work interesting and worked well together in mixed ability groups researching their findings. Their learning is facilitated well by the teacher and consequently their knowledge and understanding grows during the lesson. Skilled teaching ensures that the threads are drawn together effectively to clarify pupils' understanding. It is a similar picture in Year 5 where pupils are provided with well-organised resources in order to understand aspects of daily life of the Ancient Egyptians through their own researches, including use of the Internet and ICT systems. Learning is developing well as a result of the effective teaching. Pupils with SEN are fully included so that they are able to make similar progress to the others in the lesson. The use of time lines helps pupils to develop a sense of chronology and the order over time in which events occur.

### Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory** and meets the statutory requirements and those of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with other subjects help to strengthen pupils' understanding of the subject.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are well supported through religious education.
- Inconsistencies in lesson planning mean that teachers do not always set clear learning objectives and ways of assessing pupils' progress.

## Commentary

65. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection but a review of pupils' work shows that across the school pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age. Progress is good and pupils achieve well.
66. Year 1 pupils were seen in a lesson on celebrations where all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were encouraged to think about special occasions. Skilful questioning from the teacher prompted one boy to talk about his sister's christening, another about his parents' wedding and a girl to talk about having friends to tea. There was some very good personal development as one girl spontaneously suggested celebrating a boy's writing because it is always so 'good' and so 'neat'. This was very well handled and almost everyone was made to feel very happy and positive. The one exception was a pupil who did not feel happy about celebrating someone else's work 'instead of mine.' This too was sensitively handled.
67. Years 3 and 4 pupils were observed on a visit to a local church. The visit was well organised and pupils had a positive attitude and behaved well. They learned about the organisation of the church and various features, such as the font, the pulpit and the lectern etc., and how they are used. Pupils showed interest, listened well and asked sensible questions that revealed understanding.
68. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching and learning on the basis of only two lessons. The lessons observed were good and very good, with secure subject knowledge and good teaching skills. Teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils and make them think. Relationships are very good and pupils are well motivated to want to learn. A review of lesson planning shows that teachers are not always setting clear learning objectives and that opportunities to assess pupils during lessons are not always well thought out. This makes ongoing lesson planning less effective because teachers cannot properly plan for the needs of pupils if they have not properly assessed those needs.
69. The subject co-ordinator is new in post but has a secure understanding of the needs of the subject and is keen to develop it. The school uses a topic approach and there are good links with other subjects, including drama work, extended writing and use of computers. Religious education makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design

Provision in art is **satisfactory** based on limited evidence.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school values 'the arts' in which art and design features alongside music, drama and dance.

- Regular assessments of standards and achievements to track development in drawing and other skills do not always take place.
- Planning in the short term varies between classes.

### Commentary

70. Standards are generally at the expected levels for pupils' ages. This is based on limited evidence. Pupils achieve according to their capabilities.
71. The teaching and learning observed is good overall. This is an improvement on that reported in the last inspection. The adoption of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance means that a balanced programme of arts activities is now provided including working in 2-D and 3-D and in different scales. Good use is made of ICT as a resource for teaching and learning. Good attention is given to studying art in a range of styles and Western European traditions but there is not much in the planning on multi-cultural traditions. The school has limited resources on art from other cultures. Display enriches the learning environment. A new co-ordinator has recently been assigned to the subject. There are no opportunities as yet for the co-ordinator to formally observe lessons but it is planned as a part of school self-evaluation.

### Design and technology

Provision for design and technology is **satisfactory** in the school.

72. It was only possible to observe two lessons and there is little evidence available to make secure judgements about standards or achievement in the school. However, the lessons seen and the limited evidence available suggest that standards are at expected levels across the school. Planning and photographic evidence show that all elements of the National Curriculum are being covered.
73. Years 1 and 2 pupils were observed in food technology and appropriate attention was paid to health and hygiene, with pupils showing good understanding of why they should wash their hands and tie long hair back. The actual making of the fruit salad came at the end of a 'designing' and planning process that had involved visits to a supermarket and researching about food and fruits. There were good links with other subjects, including geography and science. It was also linked well with a class assembly where a parent governor talked about her brother's coconut farm on an island off the coast of Tanzania, with examples of fruit from that country.

### Music

Provision for music is **good** in the school.

74. Only two lessons were observed but further evidence comes from observing the extra-curricular recorder group, the choir and listening to singing in assemblies. A review of lesson planning shows that all elements of the National Curriculum are covered.
75. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about standards in Years 1 and 2, though the quality of singing in the assemblies was good throughout the school. The two lessons seen were in Years 5 and 6 and pupils in Year 6 are above the level expected for their age. Progress is good. The recorder group and the choir are very active and enthusiastic and help to raise standards of music in the school. The recorder group seen included Years 1 and 2 pupils and they are already beginning to read musical notation and learn the value of notes by clapping out the beat. More than 20 older boys and girls took part enthusiastically in the choir and were accurate and tuneful in a range of songs, including a three-part round and two-part harmony.

76. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching through the school on the evidence available, but the teaching observed in the two lessons seen was good. The teachers had secure subject knowledge and clear learning objectives which they shared with their pupils so that they knew exactly what to do. Relationships are very good and pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and are keen to do well.
77. Music is highly valued in the school and the very enthusiastic co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well and is keen to develop it further, along with the arts programme. Pupils are given many opportunities to compose and perform. There are assemblies involving art, drama and music; visitors have included the London Mozart Players and the carnival provided a great deal of musical activity. Music supports pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development well and good use is made of music from different cultures. The South African music played in assemblies during the week was a good example of this.

## **Physical education**

The provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching leads to good progress and achievement.
- A well-resourced curriculum enriched by extra-curricular sporting activities.

### **Commentary**

78. The curriculum is well organised and based upon a commercially published scheme of work linked with the national guidelines. It covers all the main aspects of physical education including dance, gymnastics, games and swimming. The subject is taught well by confident teachers who ensure through their planning that all pupils are able to achieve successfully and to their potential. By Year 6 the majority of pupils achieve or exceed the minimum requirements in swimming, and are in line with expectations in all other areas.
79. The key element of successful teaching in this subject is the quality of relationships that encourages the involvement of pupils to give of their best during lessons. In a Year 1 lesson the good relationships and management ensured that effective learning took place. Pupils showed positive attitudes and concentrated well. They showed good awareness of body and space, and are developing their control and co-ordination well. The good pace of the lesson ensured that pupils maintained their interest, and achieved very well for their age. Similarly, in Years 5 and 6, the lessons had several positive features. Planning, development, own knowledge of the subject, correct use of terminology, and good management and relationships encouraged pupils to make good progress during lessons. Opportunities to evaluate their own work, and the work of others has a positive effect upon pupils' learning. All pupils, including those with SEN, are fully involved in all aspects of lessons.
80. The provision of a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities ensures that pupils are able to participate and to develop their skills further. There are opportunities to join in sporting competition and tournaments organised for the local East Coast cluster of schools. The visits of professional coaches of short tennis further enhance the provision and opportunities for pupils to become involved and improve their performance in sport.
81. The co-ordinator has improved the provision since the last inspection through good management and leadership of the subject. More formal assessment arrangements are now linked to the new physical education guidelines. Currently, there are no opportunities for the co-ordinator to carry out lesson observations, but teaching and learning are monitored through seeing teachers' plans, and support and guidance provided when it is needed. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been good.



## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

There is **very good** provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship. Provision is particularly good through the school ethos, which is very valuing and supportive.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's ethos is very effective in supporting the provision for personal, social and health education.
- Lessons are used well to tackle issues that are of day-to-day relevance to pupils.
- Good use is made of the expertise offered by the school nurse.

### **Commentary**

82. The school's strongly valuing ethos, in which pupils know they will be listened to, is effectively enriching the work done in PSHE. Pupils feel that adults are interested in what they have to say and that they can be open and honest knowing that they will be supported. This is a very effective climate for PSHE lessons and particularly circle time which by its very nature gives pupils the chance to raise and speak about issues that are important to them.
83. Personal, social and health education is taught as a distinct subject to all classes, and is given an appropriate time allocation. However, although most staff are very committed to PSHE lessons, there were times during the inspection when PSHE lessons were cut short. In one case this was to give more time to physical education. Lessons are generally well thought out, and used well to support pupils' personal development. They give pupils very good opportunities to discuss issues that are relevant to them, such as playground behaviour. In the best lessons, teachers use the time well to provide very good support for pupils, by giving pupils good opportunities to talk about issues that worry them, and to remind pupils that they can speak to their teacher confidentially, should they need to. Some aspects of practice such as pupils having a guaranteed 'code-word' access to their teacher at a time of emergency are excellent. Pupils speak openly and frankly about their relationships with others and how they have behaved towards others. They reflect well on how they might have behaved differently.
84. The school makes good use of the expertise offered by the school nurse to support the health aspects of the PSHE programme.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*